Bernal Journal

December Issue Vol. 14, No. 7 Copyright 1977

The above photo was taken in 1928 from the top of Bernal Hill. The crowd of youths are ready to begin looking for autographed baseballs. 500 balls were hidden at the top of the hill by a group called the Bernal Boosters. Members of the Mission Reds, a local prefessional team, signed the balls and participated in the activities.

This picture illustrates the community spirit of the residents of Bernal Heights and this spirit continues today in the Bernal Heights Association.

The forerunner of the present group was formed in 1963 and called the Northern Bernal Heights Association. The aim of this group was to maintain and improve the physical and cultural standards and facilities of the neighborhood. (cont. p.2)

Zoning in Bernal

By

Jim Haas

San Francisco regulates density and attempts to control the character of development in neighborhoods through zoning. The City's present zoning law was enacted in 1960.

In recent years many people and groups through out the City have become dissatsfied with the law because it allows the construction of buildings larger than those existing in many neighborhoods and does not protect such aspects of neighborhood character as rear yards, front setbacks and building design.

In response to pressure brought by various neighborhood groups, the Planning Commission adopted in 1974 an interim set of design controls and directed the Department staff to undertake a study of residential zoning.

By 1976 the staff had drafted a new residential zoning code which was adopted on an interim basis by the Commission on May 20, 1976 and set out for public hearing during the Summer and Fall.

(Cont. on Page 8)

Elsie Street Study

By

Roger Borgenicht & Buck Bagot

The Elsie Street Group of the Northwest Bernal Block Club has received a grant of $5000 from the Donor and Community Funding Boards of the Vanguard Foundation. The grant will be applied to the six-month Elsie Street Development Study, to be completed in March.

The Vanguard Foundation has a history of funding grass-roots organizing projects and this particular grant was one of the first made by the newly formed Community Funding Board, a board composed of community activists and representatives.

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from
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To:

Bernal Journal

★★★★★★★★★★

The Bernal Journal is an open forum of the community sponsored by the Bernal Heights Association and the Bernal Fund. It is dedicated to providing the people of Bernal Heights with neighborhood news, ideas, issues, and events. Editorial decisions are made by interested people who contribute.

The next meeting is Wednesday, Jan. 11, 8 p.m. at 1621 York St.

EDITORS: Phil Johnson and Greg Catani
ADVERTISING: Pat Helton, Lil Kruse, Jerry Schwartz, Rex Coultas
CONTRIBUTORS: Carrie Carlton, Franca Bator, Roberta Shellenberger, Jackie Palmer, Buck Bagot, Lee Egger, Shawnee Power, Jane Wrench and Nancy Walker

If you are interested in writing an article or working on the paper in any way, we welcome any interested people.

Do you have an issue or gripe that you want to share? Send us a letter to the editor and let the community hear your thoughts. Send any articles or letters to Phil or Greg, 1621 York Street, 94110 or call 826-0842.

For information regarding advertising or classified ads call Rex at 648-5783.

Help Wanted

The Journal needs an advertising manager. This job is paid a commission of $30 to $50 per issue. The job takes approximately one day to do. Anybody interested call Greg or Phil at 826-0842.

Help Wanted

Elsie Survey

(Cont. from Pg. 1)

The Elsie Street Development Study will conceive a plan for the physical development of the 100 - 200 Block of Elsie Street. The Northwest Bernal Block Club is conducting the study of the area after convincing the City Planning Commission and Planning Department that unplanned development on Elsie Street would present a danger to the racial, socio-economic and architectural character of our neighborhood as a whole, as well as to the immediate physical well being of the residents of the block of Elsie Street in question.

The Plan for Elsie Street will address a number of issues: 1) the overall design of the street, roadway, sidewalks, landscaping, power lines, etc., 2) the maintenance of some open space on the block for some common use; gardens basketball courts etc., 3) the development of criteria for building on Elsie St. to ensure that new building is compatible with the scale and character of the existing architecture in the neighborhood, and 4) ensuring that low and moderate income people will be able to live on Elsie Street.

SURVEY

The Block Club felt that the neighborhood as a whole had the right to have a say in the planning of Elsie Street. It also felt that not everyone in the area had a clear sense of the questions at hand. Therefore, a survey was developed as a means of reaching out to our neighbors to involve them further in the process that the Block Club had initiated.

Over 30 Bernal Heights neighbors have begun door-to-door canvassing with the survey in the Block Club area, the area bounded by Coso, Cortland, Bonview and Mission, with a particular emphasis on the blocks between Coso and Virginia Avenues.

The survey has two parts: 1) the physical, architectural development on Elsie Street and 2) the problem of housing speculation in Bernal Heights, and San Francisco in general.

There's plenty of work to go around, including canvassing and working in the multi-lingual translator survey team, compiling raw data from the survey, working with architectural and planning consultants to put the information compiled into a useable form and working on the production and distribution of the Elsie Street Plan.

The Block Club has regular meetings on Monday nights at 7:30. Anyone interested in working with the Block Club on the Elsie Street Study or any other projects should call either 648-2809 or 282-9153 for information on meeting dates and locations.

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photo (Cont. from Pg. 1)

In the early years the association held an annual Street Fair and Art Show in Precita Park and worked on such activities as clean up and beautification of the area.

The young organization also interacted with Pacific Telephone and pressured the company to make good on its promise to landscape around the microwave facility on the top of Bernal Hill.

In 1965 the name of the organization was shortened to the Bernal Heights Association. In that same year the group successfully campaigned to have the city purchase the open space around the microwave tower to be used as a park. This purchased fulfilled a promise made by the city in 1931 to the residents of Bernal Heights.

In the years 1967-69, a tree planting program was undertaken by the B.H.A. and in that time 375 trees were planted in Bernal Heights neighborhoods.

The Association also supported the Federally Assisted Code Enforcement (FACE) program on the west side of Bernal. This program provided low interest loans from the government for code improvements, stepwalks, and street trees.

Throughout the years the group has continued to sponsor activities, such as the Street Fair and Art Show, as well as cleanups and treeplantings.

Currently the BHA is trying to realize another promise made by the city, a community center for Bernal Heights.

By
Greg Catani

Plan a Park

by Jerry Schwartz

The City of San Francisco recently acquired the huge open space near The Farm at the corner of Army Street and Potrero Avenue.

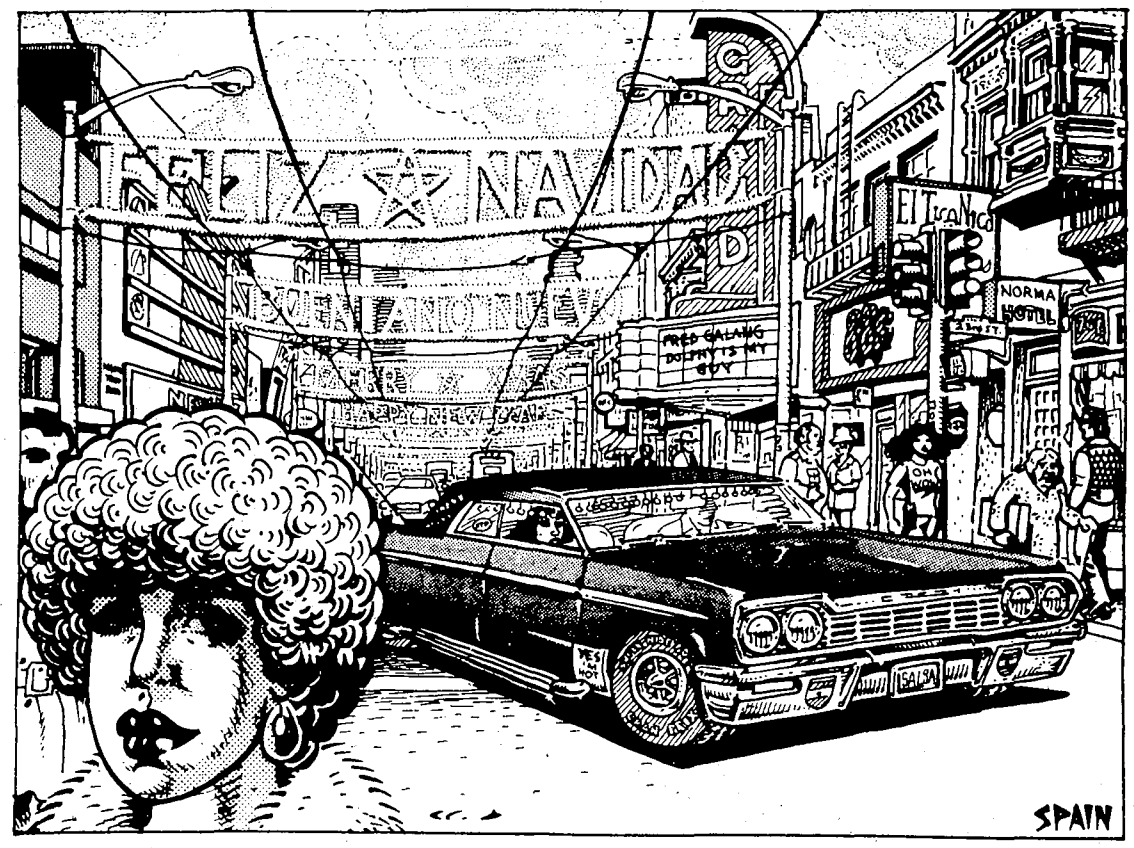
A great deal of planning will be required to see how this space can be kept open for the benefit of everyone. We hope that a natural environment can be created. An area in which people can enjoy such beautiful sites as meadows, gardens, hills, trees and perhaps even ponds by taking advantage of the underground natural springs.

There has been some talk of creating a soccer field, but this seems to benefit only a small segment of the population and will certainly add to the noise problem already in the area.

We need your support of this concept of creating a good environment that will help City people feel close to nature.

Please write to Mr. Jack Spring, Gen. Mgr., Parks Dept., McLaren Lodge, Fell & Stanyan Sts., San Francisco. Tell him that you want a touch of the country here.

It is important that the Parks Department receives our input so that our needs and desires can be met.



The above is a greeting card by Spain Rodrigues, from the collection at the Galeria de la Raza. The studio is located at 2851 24th Street in San Francisco. The proceeds for the sale will benefit the Galeria.

BERNAL HEIGHTS

PARTY

Holiday Cheer, Good Spirits, Come and Enjoy. We're meeting at our Community Center, 307 Cortland from 8 to 10 p.m. Children Welcome. Bring a Friend. Refreshments Provided.

MEETING

A group of residents from District 9 are having a meeting to plan an organization representing the entire area of the supervisorial district. The meeting will be held on Saturday December 10 at 10:30 a.m. beg-

The meeting will be held at 375 Highland Street. All District 9 residents are invited.

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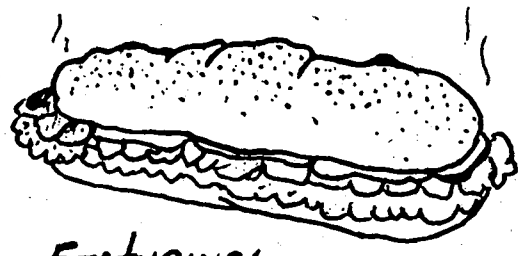

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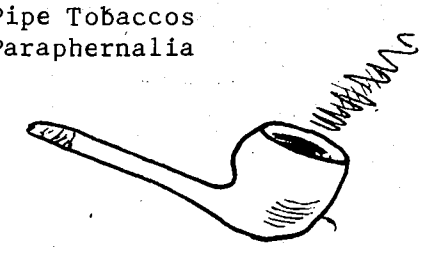

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PRECITA BAZAAR

The Precita Christmas Arts and Crafts Bazaar will be held on December 17th from 12-8 PM at 534 Precita Ave.

The bazaar will include Artists and Craftspeople, film and video Artists.

A performing program will also be presented and the schedule is :

12:30-1:30	Make a Circus clowns
1:30-2:00	Mime and Storytelling
2:00-3:00	"Chicken Made of Rags" musical puppet show
4:30-6:30	Precita Workshops Show: Latin Percussion Class, Polynesian Dancers, Music and Songs.

There will be simultaneous showings of videotapes of neighborhood activities and special showing of 16 mm and Super 8 films by Hill film-makers. All talent and craftspeople are from the neighborhood. Come and support the efforts of our creative people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds!

If anyone is interested in a booth space or volunteering please call Carole or Agnes at 285-7833 or Susan at 285-2287.

Community Board Starts in Bernal

By

Shirley Fogarina

Imagine a people-run program dealing with neighborhood disputes and minor crimes. There is no bureaucracy, no lawyers, courts or police to haggle with. Instead, community people volunteer on panels to help solve neighborhood problems.

That's exactly what's happening in Bernal Heights. The neighborhood has initiated a Community Board program. Three panels, which will consist of neighborhood residents, are now going through training at St. Kevin's Church, Precita Center and the Samoan Church. After December 10, they will spend six months hearing and helping to resolve cases brought to them by community residents and agencies.

Cases might include consumer complaints, battery, theft and landlord-tenant disputes. The community board will be a place where neighborhood disputes can be settled in a way that meets the needs of those involved and the entire community.

Participation in the new program is entirely voluntary. Panelists, selected by their communities, serve for six months and then leave in order to let other people go through training and participate in the program. Disputing parties, who have agreed on the nature of their problem, bring their case before the neighborhood board. The board hears both sides of the dispute.

Lill Kruse, a 30-year resident of Bernal Heights, thinks the program is a good way to get young and old working together. Panelists are balanced for race, age and sex and Ms. Kruse believes Community Boards have strong crime prevention potential.

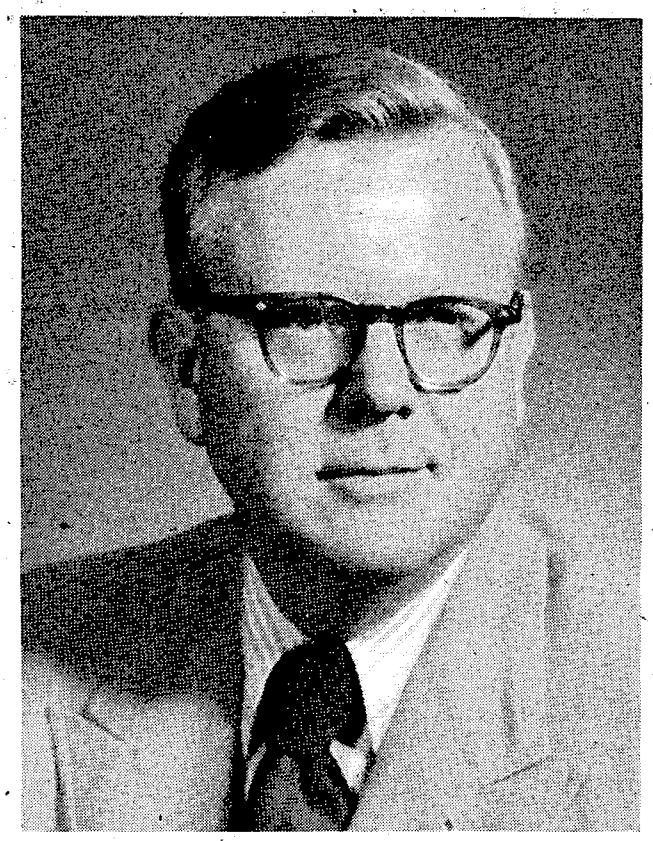
The Community Board program is endorsed by the district attorney's office, the police department and Bernal Heights community groups and churches. It is now working in Bernal Heights and Visitacion Valley. The program is a very real alternative to over-burdened police and court systems. It is neighborhood and not agency oriented.

Martin Harrington, another Bernal Heights board member, likes the democratic concept of the program. "The boards give people more control over their communities," he said. "There are many things that bureaucracies can't deal with and the panels will be a focal point, not only to solve local problems, but where neighbors can get to know each other."

If Bernal Heights residents have a problem or incident they'd like to discuss, they can phone the Community Board office at 552-1250 and describe their situations. Community Board staff will return all calls and discuss the problems. All parties connected with situations will be contacted and invited to attend neighborhood panels.

There are three Bernal Heights panels, each representing an area of the neighborhood. Area I panelists are Lill Kruse, Janet and Wayne Veatch, Sabira Scott, Agnes Sua, Jim Bourgart, Sherry Becker, Marla Zamora and Neley Moor.

Those serving Area II are Ruth Nomura, Annie Trusty, Kathi Smith, Wesley Leung, Sheri Hunkin and Jeanne Angier. Area III panelists are Martin Harrington, the Reverend Chuck Regal, Nancy White, Max Belvis, Lynn Childs, Lionel Basurto and Dora Santa Maria.



Dolson Wins In District 9

Lee Dolson, professor of Political Science at City College, is the new supervisor from District 9. Dolson won with 27% of the vote, followed by Bob Covington with 22%.

Both candidates feel that Dolson would have won a runoff election, if there had been one.

Dolson pointed out that he had strong support from former students and large numbers of middle class homeowners, who were attracted to his record as a fiscal conservative.

The Journal spoke with Supr Dolson in his office at City College recently. He said that he was interested in hearing from all groups and individuals in the District about problems.

For Bernal Heights, Dolson said that he would support efforts to get a Community Center on Cortland St. (Ed. note - see Community Center article.)

On the other side of the hill, Dolson said he would support increased funding for the Precita Center and would try to do something about the drug problem in Precita Park. He mentioned that more lights in the park at night would make the area safer.

Dolson served on the Board of Education for 5 years and had a reputation for cost cutting. He plans to carry over this stance on the Board of Supervisors to fight rising taxes.

"If President Carter tries to balance the federal budget, and I think he will, then he will be cutting aid to the cities and job programs," Dolson said. "Unless we can encourage the private sector, San Francisco is in real trouble."

Dolson indicated that the city had to stop talking about taxing business, if this was driving business out of the city and preventing new business from coming to the city, costing San Francisco jobs and tax money.

Rather than initiate new taxes, Dolson would prefer to cut costs and waste from city government. He said that there was large administrative waste in the police and fire departments, in education and at city hall.

One example Dolson pointed to was the child care system run by the school district.

"Senior teachers are taken out of the classrooms and put into child care These teachers are paid more than $20,000 per year and work 180 days.

San Francisco uses certificated personnel, but the state does not require it," Dolson said.

Dolson would have the city employ and train residents who wanted to get into child care. These people would be paid perhaps half as much as the senior teachers and work a 235 day year.

"For the same price we're paying now, we could take in the entire 5,000 child waiting list for day care," Dolson said.

Dolson said that he wanted to keep the lines of communication open to people in the district. He will have an office downtown when he is sworn in and intends to use his office at City College to see people. He also wants to start using space in the public schools to regularly meet with people in the district.

"People who need help have got to say so," the supervisor said. Anyone needing to contact the supervisor can call him at City College.

Bernal Heights Community Center

by Roberta Shellenberger and Jackie Palmer

As of October 1977 the Community Center Task Force Committee found themselves in a "Catch 22" situation. The various social services such as the YMCA, Headstart and United Way could not commit themselves to joining our Community Center without a definite site to insure conformity with applicable laws and regulations. On the other hand, the Mayor's Office of Community Development would not commit funds for securing a site without assurance from specific social services that they would be utilizing the site. The committee came to the conclusion that their first priority must be to purchase a site. They found this task to be an impossibility without someone with authority to commit funds present when a desireable site was found.

On October 20th representatives of the Task Force and M. Tway Smith, Chairman, met with Supervisor Al Nelder. Nelder is chairman of the Community Services Committee of the Board of Supervisors. Tway explained our situation to Nelder, and he was very receptive. He presented our problem to the Board of Supervisors at their next meeting on October 24th. The very next day a letter addressed to Mr. Carl Williams, Director of the Mayor's Office of Community Development, and to Mr. Rai Y. Okamoto, Director of Planning of the City Planning Department, was written by the Board on our behalf. The addressees were asked to meet jointly with members of the Task Force in order to obtain specific information as to the needs and desires of the community and to establish a means whereby possible locations could be considered which would be in conformity with laws and regulations which the various social services are bound by.

A response from the City Planning Department was received by Tway. He was informed that Lou Blazej is our new Community Liason worker who will listen to the needs of our community and insure that someone from the City's Real Estate Department will work closely with us in finding and purchasing a site. This person is supposed to be available to us in early December.

Just to keep the wheels rolling, on November 17th we met with Supervisor John Molinari who is vice-chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Supervisors. It just so happened Mr. Molinari was meeting with Mr. Carl Williams from the Office of Community Development that very afternoon. He assured us that he would discuss our situation with Mr. Williams. To date, we have heard nothing from Mr. Williams' Office of Community Development which has the final authority to release funds for the purchase of a Community Center.

The next meeting of the Community Center Task Force is on December 15th at 7:30 PM at 307 Cortland. Mr. Blazej has been invited to attend the meeting to hear the needs of the community. We are encouraged by this one step forward--there is lots of work to be done to keep the momentum going. Come! We need the help of all who want to see the Bernal Heights Community Center become a reality.

Holly Courts' Resident Artist

By

Rex Israel

(Ed. note - Michael Cook has a grant from The California Arts Council to do murals and teach art at the Holly Courts housing project near Holly Park.)

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS GRANT?

It's for artists who are living around in the community near where they could be serving. It's essentially to give some money for the artist to go and do community work there. There are a lot of different programs that other people are involved in. Some people are dancers, some people are puppeteers--a lot of different programs. But basically what's going on here is classes of drawing and painting and a little mural work.

THE THRUST OF YOUR PROGRAM IS TO BE OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS TO SPONSOR YOUR OWN GROWTH AS AN ARTIST? IS THAT RIGHT?

Right. I even do painting here sometimes--not really planned as demonstrations, but it turns out I'm painting here and doors are open and people come in--I invite people to come in.

WHAT IS YOUR STYLE OF PAINTING?

It's hard for me to express. It's what has been called by other people visionary art. I don't really like that label. I find my work difficult to catagorize that way.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEDIUM?

That's difficult to answer. I've mostly worked in acrylic and water color. To say which is my favorite would be really hard.

HAVE YOU A FAVORITE SUBJECT MATTER?

I'm inclining more toward abstraction as I get older, which isn't necessarily a subject matter. From an early age I've been involved with landscape painting, basically, and have done probably more of that than anything else.

WILL PEOPLE FIND A THEME OR THREAD RUNNING THROUGH YOUR WORK? IF SO, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Well, I think one of the themes that is significant to me is, I would say, the evolution of human consciousness.

WHY SHOULD YOU CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS FINANCIAL SUPPORT?

I think it's a good program to have here. In fact, I would like to see a lot more of them being done. I think more artists should be doing the kind of jobs that I do in communities. Because it brings the nature of art out of the museums and galleries and down to a level where people can understand and relate to it.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF BERNAL HEIGHTS?

Bernal Heights is a great neighborhood. I think that one of the things that make it good is that people have a good consciousness of what they want in their area and

(Cont. on Pg. 7)

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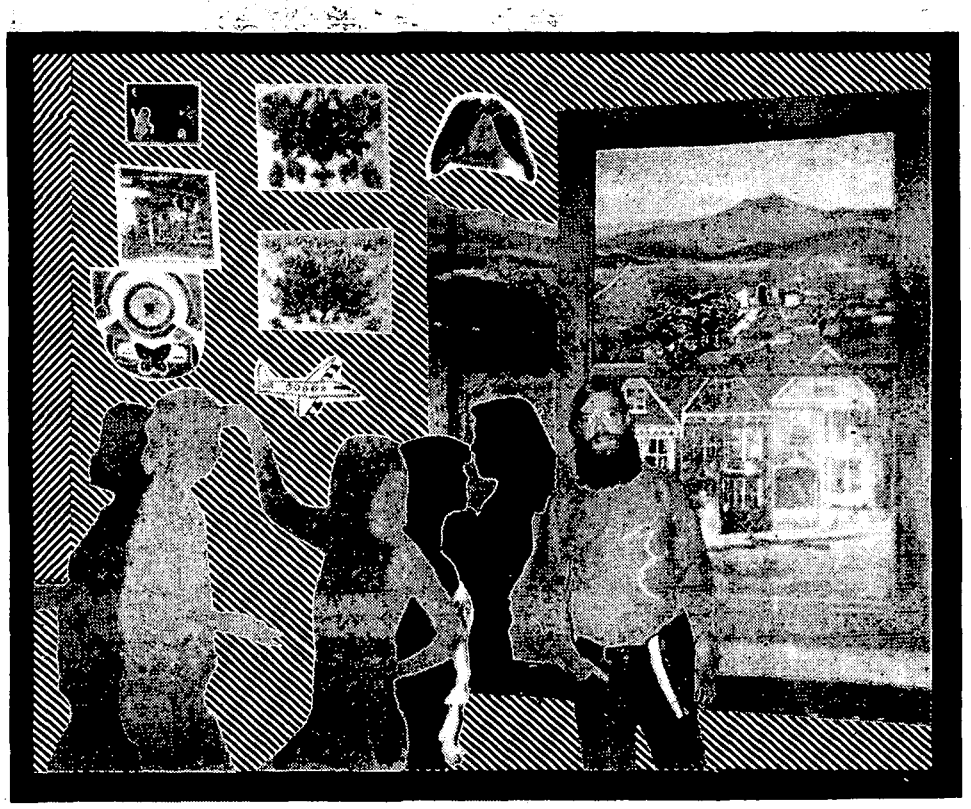

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Drivers Takeover Yellow Cab Co.

by Jerry Schwartz

After a struggle to achieve owner-status in their own organization, over 170 people in a cooperative venture have put Yellow Cab back on the streets of San Francisco.

It was just over a year ago, on November 30, 1976, when the old Yellow Cab Company went bankrupt and was forced to cease its operations. This left a fleet of over 400 taxicabs idle in its lot at 8th and Townsend Streets.

It also put approximately one thousand people out of work and deprived many cab-riding San Franciscans and out-of-towners of a needed method of transportation.

The reasons why it took a year to get the cabs rolling again are very complex. Most of them are due to the battles that were caused over the purchase of the assets of the former company by various groups.

In May 1977 Judge Herbert Katz of the San Diego Federal Bankruptcy Court awarded the assets of old Yellow Cab to a group of drivers and investors who were willing to come up with the necessary $4.5 million to acquire a company that would bring taxi service back to the City.

Several groups tried to block the sale, each one for its own reasons, and this caused further delays. However, the court again favored the fledgling Yellow Cab Co-operative members.

Each co-op member paid $15,000 for his membership ($5,000 down and the remaining $10,000 payable over a three-year period) plus an additional $1,000 to the City of San Francisco for a "transfer fee." By investing this money it says that they have faith in the taxi industry and they are putting up their cash so that the people of San Francisco can have superior cab service.

ARTIST

(Cont. from Pg. 6

what they don't want, and are pretty vocal about it. More so than a lot of other parts of the city where people don't care that much.

DO YOU HAVE A CERTAIN PHILOSOPHY BY WHICH YOU LIVE?

I'd say basically my philosophy is to treat people as I would like to be treated myself.

DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU THINK OUR READERS MIGHT WANT TO HEAR ABOUT?

Only one other thing. I think you might mention the fact that we're having art classes here on Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. now for adults. I'm trying to go outside the immediate community here a little bit to be able to encourage more people, and maybe get a core of more serious students. That's open to anyone right now. It's totally free. All the materials that we have are free.

IS THERE A TELEPHONE WHERE YOU ARE SO THAT PEOPLE COULD CALL YOU IF THEY WANTED?

Yes. The number is 647-5040.

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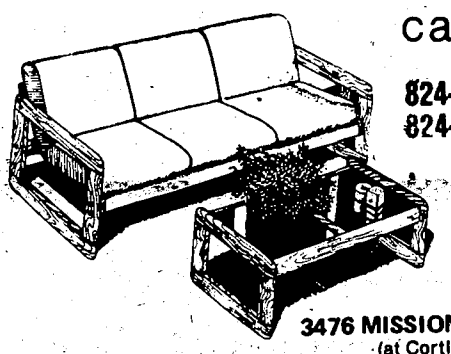
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Zoning

(Cont. from Pg. 1)

On November 29, 1977 the staff presented to the Commission its proposed revisions to the May 20 ordinance based on the public hearings and further study. The Commission proposes to hold hearings on the revised ordinance in January and February, adopt final ordinance in March and pass it on to the Board of Supervisors for further hearings in April and May.

Under the present ordinance, Bernal Heights has zoning restricting development to single family housing and two unit flats, but the new zoning ordinance has great significance for the area.

Since Bernal Heights has become "discovered" by realtors and developers, we have seen a large amount of new construction in the past year. Some of the construction is of high quality but most of it lacks good design and has a negative effect on the surrounding areas.

The new ordinance will require builders of single family as well as multi-unit buildings to conform to certain design standards. The size of curb cuts is reduced resulting in smaller and fewer garage doors and more on-street parking.

Facades on new row buildings can no longer be flat but must now be varied. Also the upper story can be set back to create a front top deck. Central lobbies in multi-unit buildings are discouraged and separate entrances encouraged.

Street level landscaping is required.

These new standards will make it easier too for people in Bernal Heights to deal with new developers as in the Elsie street situation.

Hearings on the zoning standards will be held on January 12 at 2:00 p.m. and January 19 at 7:30 p.m. at City Hall. Hearings on the zoning of individual parcels will be held in February. The Bernal Heights Association will take a position on the text and zoning map for Bernal Heights in January. Anyone with any comments or concerns should call Jim Haas at 285-5048.

Adult Education

If all goes well, free adult education classes will be offered the first of February at Le Conte Elementary School, Harrison and Army. Plans are for six different continuous classes, at various times. The scheduling is flexible; also the subjects offered. But each class must have 20 students to remain open.

So far we have plans for self defense, assertiveness training, Clear English, basic math, poetry writing, journalism, home repair and home decorating. If you would be interested in taking these classes, or other classes; or if you want to teach a class, call Patricia Helton at Mission Community College, 648-1415, and leave your name. I will call you back.

BHA Members

YES I WANT TO JOIN THE B.H.A.
I pledge to try to better my neighborhood in any way I can. Here is my ☐ $2 ☐ $_____ or ☐ Work/Barter Pledge in place of money.

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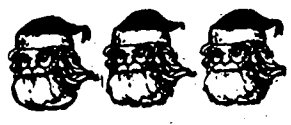

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